
The Scholarship Informing the Practice: Multicultural Teacher Education Philosophy and Practice in the United States

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This study examines the scholarly literature identified by multicultural teacher educators in the United States as most influential to their work. More than 200 multicultural teacher educators were surveyed about the books and the journals that have most influenced the ways they conceive and practice multicultural teacher education (MTE). Responses were tabulated, creating lists of the most-identified books and journals. These lists were analyzed around three primary questions: (1) What do these data suggest about the philosophical frameworks and operationalizations of MTE among multicultural teacher educators?; (2) What do they reveal about the issues multicultural teacher educators consider more or less integral to MTE?; and (3) What might they uncover about the “null curriculum” of MTE? Findings suggest that, in contrast with much of the existing scholarship, MTE practitioners do engage with critical approaches to MTE, even if this might not be reflected consistently in their practice, and that MTE practitioners identify more strongly with literature concerning race and racism than with that concerning other identities and oppressions. Implications of these findings are discussed.

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The relatively brief history of research on multicultural teacher education (MTE) has focused largely on exploring the dispositions and consciousness development of teacher education students. Scholars have examined in detail how MTE impacts the attitudes and practice of teachers (Bigelow, Wesely, & Opsahl, 2009; Bruna, 2007; DeMulder, Ndura-Ouédraogo, & Stribling, 2009; Edwards & Kuhlman, 2007; Kraehe, 2010; Li, 2007; Martin, 2010; Mueller & O'Connor, 2007; Ross, 2008; Spinthourakis, 2007; Thompson, 2009; Vavrus, 2009), participant resistance to MTE (Case & Hemmings, 2005; de Courcy, 2007; Thomas & Vanderhaar, 2008), and the processes by which MTE coursework and professional development succeed or fail at strengthening the awareness or competencies of participants (Aveling, 2006; Case & Hemmings, 2005; de Courcy, 2007; Erden, 2008; Montgomery & McGlynn, 2009; Moss,

2008; Pennington, 2007; Raible & Irizarry, 2007; Wright & Tolan, 2009). In contrast, with few exceptions (see, for example, Trent, Kea, & Oh, 2008), scholars have paid little empirical attention to the dispositions and consciousness of MTE practitioners—those who are designing and facilitating MTE experiences.

In fact, despite having a plethora of ideas about what multicultural teacher educators ought to be doing, we know very little about what those who prepare teachers to be multicultural practitioners are, in fact, doing in a systemic sense—what sorts of theoretical frameworks are being engaged widely in MTE and which issues receive sufficient or insufficient attention in MTE courses. This omission is important on at least two fronts. First, it inhibits our abilities to uncover, beyond single classes or programs, the theoretical and philosophical frames educators are being prepared to apply in the name of “multicultural education.” Secondly, it inhibits our abilities to identify the support and resources that best prepare multicultural teacher educators to do their work effectively.

In an effort to begin filling this gap, I implemented and here report the findings of a study designed to provide additional insight into philosophy and practice in MTE. My primary question was “*Which scholarly and trade literature do multicultural teacher educators in the U.S. identify as most influential to their MTE practice?*” My secondary question was “*What does this literature suggest about the dispositions and frameworks that multicultural teacher educators are carrying into their practice?*” For the purposes of this study, “multicultural teacher educators” were conceptualized as people who identified their primary vocation as teaching MTE courses or providing other types of MTE professional development to current or future P-12 educators.

Contextualizing This Study

Two areas within the larger MTE literature were particularly relevant to this study. First, a review of the scholarship on the definition and operationalization of MTE provided a contextual frame with which to analyze the literature identified by participants as influencing their practice. Secondly, a review of scholarship on social and political forces informing the dispositions and attitudes, and, as a result, the practice, of multicultural teacher educators provided important sociopolitical context for this study.

Defining and Operationalizing MTE

A considerable challenge to analyzing any aspect of MTE theory and practice lies in determining what, exactly, MTE is. Definitions of multicultural education vary widely (Castagno, 2009). It stands to reason, then, that practitioners define MTE in vastly different ways (Gorski, 2009).

In order to make sense of the variations in definitions and, more importantly, the ways in which these variations are operationalized, scholars such as Banks (2004), Grant and Sleeter (2006), and McLaren (1995) have constructed typologies of

approaches to multicultural education. Although their typologies differ in terminology, they each offer an operational continuum ranging from a *contributions* approach that celebrates diversity with slight curricular shifts while maintaining the hegemonic status quo to a *reconstructionist* approach that demands the elimination of social and educational inequities. The fact that these typologies are presented as continua of multicultural education as it is *operationalized in practice* is important for two reasons. First, each of these scholars offers a definition of multicultural education that frames it explicitly in terms of the “reconstructionist” end of their respective continuum. Secondly, the operational typologies acknowledge the history of research demonstrating the gap between multicultural education theory and practice (Gorski, 2006; Jackson, 2003).

Jenks, Lee, and Kanpool (2001), adapting McLaren’s (1995) typology of approaches to multiculturalism, imagined three approaches to pre-service MTE: conservative, liberal, and critical. In order to uncover the ways in which their approaches were being operationalized in MTE coursework, I conducted a content analysis of 45 MTE course syllabi. An outcome of the study was a new typology of approaches to MTE, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Approaches to multicultural teacher education and percentage found to reflect each approach

	Approach	Contextualizing frameworks	Objectives	Syllabi analyzed (%)
Conser-vative	Teaching the “Other”	Group-specific studies (e.g., the culture of poverty framework, teaching Latino students), contributions approach	To prepare teachers to work effectively with a diverse student population by studying the cultures, values, lifestyles, and worldviews of individual identity groups and how to assimilate them into the education system.	15.6%
Liberal	Teaching with Cultural Sensitivity and Tolerance	Human relations, intergroup relations, tolerance education, cultural sensitivity, celebrating diversity	To prepare teachers to tolerate difference and to be aware of and sensitive to diversity, particularly through an examination of personal biases and prejudices	28.9%
	Teaching with Multicultural Competence	Multicultural competence, culturally relevant instruction, cultural responsive teaching, cultural appropriate pedagogy	To equip teachers with the knowledge and practical skills necessary to implement multicultural curricular and pedagogical strategies, enabling them to meet the diverse learning needs of students	28.9%
Critical	Teaching in Sociopolitical	Critical theories, liberatory education, critical multicultural	To engage teachers in a critical examination of the systemic influences of power, oppression,	22.2%

	Context	education, social justice education, critical pedagogy	dominance, inequity, and injustice on schooling, from their own practice to institutional and federal educational policy	
	Teaching as Resistance and Counter-Hegemonic Practice	Contextualizing frameworks listed under “Teaching in Sociopolitical Context,” postcolonial theory	To prepare teachers to be change agents through the sort of critical examination described under “Teaching in Sociopolitical Context” and through studying strategies for, and engaging in, counter-hegemonic teaching and social activism	6.7%

These findings lent some support to the often-repeated, but rarely empirically evidenced, notion that MTE most often is operationalized in ways that are inconsistent with multicultural education theory (Juárez, Smith, & Hayes, 2008; Schick & St. Denis, 2005; Ukpokodu, 2007). I found that MTE courses in the U.S. were being designed for the most part to enrich teachers’ cultural sensitivity and practical curricular skills, both important pieces of the larger multicultural education puzzle. However, a majority of these courses were not designed to meet the larger goals of multicultural education—those concerned with power, equity, and oppression.

Influences on the Dispositions, Attitudes, and Practice of Multicultural Teacher Educators

Although many scholars have pointed to inconsistencies between common operationalizations of MTE and the equity and social justice roots of multicultural education theory, considerably fewer have analyzed *why* these inconsistencies persist. Those who have done so have identified several factors that influence the ways in which MTE practitioners frame and practice MTE. Among these, the most commonly identified factors are (1) the larger sociopolitical context in which MTE is practiced, and (2) student or participant resistance.

The Sociopolitical Context of MTE

Several scholars in recent years have lamented growing neoliberal pressures on teacher education in general and on multicultural teacher education (Grant, 2004; Hirsch, 2005; Sleeter, 2008). These scholars point to a variety of trends as evidence of these pressures, including the imposition of high-stakes testing and the looming threat of standardization in teacher education.

These pressures are most noticeable in teacher education in the movement away from teacher preparation with an explicit equity focus and toward that which

produces classroom technicians (Keiser, 2005; Sleeter, 2008). Others (Asher, 2007; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Vavrus, 2002) have warned of a related reframing of educational equity. According to Cochran-Smith, equity “is increasingly being conceptualized as opportunities for all students to be held equally accountable to the same high-stakes tests despite unequal resources” while teacher education “is increasingly being conceptualized as a training and testing problem” focused on “bringing pupils’ test scores to a certain minimum threshold” (p. 1). So although institutions hosting degree programs in education often claim “diversity” and “multiculturalism” as central program values (Gordon, 2005), teacher educators who operationalize this commitment in ways that transcend “celebrating diversity” often are marginalized or ordered to soften their politics (Juárez, Smith, & Hayes, 2008; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2008; Ukpokodu, 2007).

Multicultural teacher educators, like everybody else, are subject to considerable pressures to conform to these ideologies. These pressures intensify when they work within institutions which are steeped in these ideologies (Gorski, 2006, 2008). The pressures can be particularly influential to those who are untenured or those, such as multicultural teacher educators of color, who often already face formidable institutional barriers (Juárez, Smith, & Hayes, 2008).

Resistance

Similarly, student or participant resistance—a symptom, perhaps, of this larger sociopolitical context—can be extremely influential to multicultural teacher educators, including those who are vulnerable for other reasons. This may be especially true in higher education, where students have some amount of power, in the form of course evaluations, over the livelihoods of faculty.

Like people of any vocation, most educators enter their professional milieu with dispositions and worldviews shaped by ideologies, such as deficit ideology (Gorski, 2008; Valenzuela, 2002) and meritocracy (Bruna, 2007; Klug, Luckey, Wilkins, & Whitfield, 2006), that are hostile to ideals of equity and social justice. These ideologies inform the biases educators carry into MTE experiences, including those around class (Romo & Chavez, 2006), race (Bruna, 2007), sexual orientation (Asher, 2007), gender (Erden, 2009), and language (de Courcy, 2007). Many enter MTE experiences in denial of their own privilege (Reed & Black, 2006) or even to the idea that inequities exist (Case & Hemmings, 2005). When multicultural teacher educators challenge these views, students and participants often respond with resistance (Asher, 2007; Vavrus, 2002).

In documenting the influence of this sort of resistance on teacher educators, Juárez, Smith, and Hayes (2008) describe how it leads many to operationalize social justice education in ways that cater to the emotional safety of White educators—another spoke in the wheel of White privilege in teacher education. Similarly, I have written previously about ways in which MTE tends to be designed and practiced in ways that are palatable to the most resistant participants (Gorski, 2006). The result, again,

appears to be that MTE on average reflects more of a “conservative” or “liberal” approach to MTE than a “critical” one.

Methodology

I drew on survey data from 220 multicultural teacher educators. These included individuals who provided MTE in a variety of contexts including education degree programs, schools, and state departments of education.

Sample

Participants were identified through electronic snowball sampling. I posted announcements about the survey on a variety of email discussion forums (“listservs”) frequently used by multicultural teacher educators, asking people to contact me if they fit my conceptualization of “multicultural teacher educator” and wished to participate. These included forums hosted by EdChange, Rethinking Schools, the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME), the Education for Liberation Network, and the “Social Context of Education,” and “Teaching and Teacher Education” special interest groups of American Educational Research Association (AERA). Participants were diverse by a variety of measures—race, gender, sexual orientation, and the context in which multicultural teacher education is provided (see Appendix for details).

Instrument

The instrument, a Web-based online survey, consisted of 23 items. Seven were demographic. Sixteen were the “resource” items, asking participants to identify books, Web sites, films, conferences, and other resources that have been particularly influential in their MTE work. In each of the “resource” items, participants were asked to identify up to two resources, so that rather than asking each participant to name the single book that has been most helpful in her or his MTE work, I asked them to list “up to two” such books. As a result, although 197 participants, for example, responded to an item about the MTE-related books they were most likely to recommend to people with “little previous knowledge” about multicultural education and related fields, 374 responses were captured for that item.

For the purpose of this study I focused exclusively on data pertaining to the scholarly and trade literature most often identified by participants. These included responses to three survey items which asked participants to name: (1) up to two books they would recommend to somebody with little previous knowledge about multicultural education, social justice education, and related topics; (2) up to two books they would recommend to somebody with moderate previous knowledge about these topics; and

(3) up to two magazines or journals that have been most helpful to them in their MTE work.

All items on the survey, including these, were worded purposefully. For example, knowing from previous research (Gorski, 2009) that some multicultural teacher educators do not have the power to choose the materials they use in classes or other professional development contexts, I avoided simply asking which books participants used or assigned in their classes or workshops. I also felt that asking, similarly directly, which books were most influential for participants would have missed the philosophy-practice connection I hoped to explore. So, leaning heavily on feedback from expert reviewers and my pilot test, I asked participants which books they would recommend if “somebody with little previous knowledge” asked for resources “to introduce her or him” to the most important elements “of multicultural education, social justice education, and related fields.” Similarly, rather than asking which magazines and journals that they are most likely to assign or that have been most influential to them, I asked participants to name those that have been “most helpful” to their MTE work because, as was noted in feedback from my expert reviewers, this language connotes *use of*, rather than just *consumption of*, the magazine or journal.

Five expert reviewers agreed to provide feedback on the survey, including the items focused upon here. Upon revising the instrument based on their feedback, I ran it through a pilot test with 14 multicultural teacher educators before revising and sending it to participants.

Data Analysis

Responses for all items were recorded into electronic files, where I tabulated the number of times each resource was identified. I arranged responses in order of the number of times each was named. Each list of resources was analyzed individually before I turned my attention to considering the implications of the results as a whole.

Although I captured the number of times each resource was identified by a participant and included that information on the individual lists of resources, I imagined each list as its own body of qualitative data to be mined for insights into the philosophy and practice of MTE. In doing so I drew on Strauss’ (1987) four coding principles: (1) ask the data a specific and consistent set of questions, (2) analyze the data minutely, (3) frequently interrupt the coding to write a theoretical note, and (4) never assume the analytic relevance of any traditional variable until the data show it to be relevant. The questions I asked the data were: (1) What, if anything, do these data suggest about the most common philosophical frameworks and operationalizations of MTE among multicultural teacher educators? and (2) What, if anything, do these data reveal about the issues and concerns multicultural teacher educators consider to be more or less integral to multicultural teacher education?

Findings

I begin by sharing findings from each resource item, including both the resource lists and analyses of those lists. I follow these analyses, in my Discussion, with a larger examination of patterns and intricacies observed across individual item data.

Most-Recommended Books, Introductory-Level

Participants (n=197; total responses=374) were asked to name up to two books they would recommend to somebody with “little previous knowledge about multicultural education, social justice education, and related fields.” The 25 books most often identified, all of which were named in three or more responses, are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Most-Recommended Introductory-Level Books (n=197; total=374)

Times Identified	Title and Author(s) or Editor(s)
28	<i>Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education</i> by Sonia Nieto & Patricia Bode
18	<i>Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives</i> by James A. Banks & Cherry A. McGee Banks (Eds.)
18	<i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i> by Paulo Freire
18	<i>“Why Are All the Black Children Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?” and Other Conversations About Race</i> by Beverly Daniel Tatum
13	<i>The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children</i> by Gloria Ladson-Billings
12	<i>We Can’t Teach What We Don’t Know: White Teachers, Multiracial Schools</i> by Gary Howard
9	<i>Introduction to Multicultural Education</i> by James A. Banks
9	<i>Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice</i> by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, & Pat Griffin
8	<i>Other People’s Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom</i> by Lisa Delpit
8	<i>Savage Inequalities: Children in America’s Schools</i> by Jonathan Kozol
8	<i>Teaching to Transgress</i> by bell hooks
7	<i>Readings for Diversity and Social Justice: An Anthology on Racism, Antisemitism, Sexism, Heterosexism, Ableism, and Classism</i> by Maurianne Adams, Warren J. Blumenfeld, Carmelita Canstañeda, & Heather Hackman (Eds.)

6	<i>Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education</i> by James A. Banks & Cherry A. McGee Banks (Eds.)
5	<i>Deculturalization and the Struggle for Equality: A Brief History of the Education of Dominated Cultures in the United States</i> by Joel Spring
5	<i>The Light in Their Eyes: Creating Multicultural Learning Communities</i> by Sonia Nieto
5	<i>Making Choices for Multicultural Education: Five Approaches to Race, Class, and Gender</i> by Christine E. Sleeter & Carl A. Grant
3	<i>Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children</i> by Louise Derman-Sparks
3	<i>Black Ants and Buddhists</i> by Mary Cowhey
3	<i>A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America</i> by Ronald Takaki
3	<i>Diversity and Multiculturalism: A Reader</i> by Shirley R. Steinberg (Ed.)
3	<i>Handbook of Social Justice in Education</i> by William C. Ayers, Therese Quinn, & David Stovall (Eds.)
3	<i>Rethinking Multicultural Education: Teaching for Racial and Cultural Justice</i> by Wayne Au (Ed.)
3	<i>Rethinking Our Classrooms: Teaching for Equity and Justice, Volume I</i> by Wayne Au, Bill Bigelow, & Stan Karp (Eds.)
3	<i>Rethinking Our Classrooms: Teaching for Equity and Justice, Volume II</i> by Bill Bigelow (Ed.)
3	<i>White Teacher</i> by Vivian Gussin Paley

What stood out about this list were the authors: a virtual who's who of the history of multicultural education theory: C. Banks, J. Banks, Grant, Howard, Ladson-Billings, Nieto, Sleeter, Spring, and so on (alphabetically listed). Illustrating their long-time presence in and impact on the field, several of the books by these authors and editors have been revised into 5th, 6th, or 7th editions. *Affirming Diversity*, far and away the book identified by the most participants, is in its 5th edition.

Considering this phenomenon from a different angle, although it might make logical sense that the vast majority of these books were written or edited by people long-established in the multicultural education milieu, there is a "null" curriculum at play here. Excepting a few of the newer, emerging scholars who appear in the role of co-editor (e.g., Stovall and Hackman), newer, emerging voices in the field are notably absent from the list. With the exception, perhaps, of Cowhey, whose book is one of the few popular press, as opposed to professional or textbook-style, publications on the list, even those authors and lead editors whom one might associate only tangentially with MTE because they have not written explicitly about multicultural education (e.g., hooks, Kozol, and Takaki), are long-established entities in the field.

In light of multicultural education's philosophical ties to critical pedagogy (Gay, 1995; Nieto, 2004), other notable absences include critical pedagogists (i.e., Henry

Gioux) whose scholarship informed Sleeter's and others' determination to bring a more consistently critical edge to multicultural education discourses. Freire is one noteworthy exception to this absence. It should be noted, though, that some have argued that most discussions of Freire's book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, occur without the historical and political context necessary to understand its critical depths (Holst, 2006), so his representation of the critical pedagogy dimension of multicultural education might not be as impactful on the practice of MTE as his place on this list indicates.

At the same time, although several of these books might be consistent with "liberal" approaches to MTE ("Teaching with Cultural Sensitivity and Tolerance" and "Teaching with Multicultural Competence"), many—including *Affirming Diversity* and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*—engage frameworks more consistent with "critical" approaches ("Teaching in Sociopolitical Context" and "Teaching as Resistance and Counter-Hegemonic Practice"). In fact, a majority of the edited volumes include pieces which acknowledge privilege and power and inform counter-hegemonic practice. Some, such as *Handbook of Social Justice in Education*, are also grounded in such frameworks across chapters. Overall, the data skew more critical than I expected, particularly considering the fact that these books were identified by participants as those they were most likely to recommend to somebody with "little previous knowledge" about multicultural and social justice education.

Finally, although the list contained several readers that cut across identities and oppressions (it was particularly heartening to see that the latest edition of *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives* included a chapter on heterosexism), five of the 25 books focused explicitly on one particular oppression or identity. Four of these five, and *three of the six top books overall*, centered race while the fifth, *Savage Inequalities*, centered socioeconomic concerns. This finding was consistent with a previous study (Amosa & Gorski, 2008) which demonstrated that race receives a majority of the attention in MTE contexts while other issues, such as sexual orientation or religion, often receive little, if any, attention.

Most-Recommended Books, Moderate-Expertise

In addition to introductory-level books, participants (n=197, total responses=374) were asked to identify up to two books that they would recommend to help somebody with "moderate previous knowledge" about multicultural education, social justice education, and related topics "develop a more advanced level of knowledge." The top 20 responses (books named in three or more responses) are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Most-Recommended Moderate-Expertise Books (n=197; total=374)

Times Identified	Title and Author(s) or Editor(s)
23	<i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i> by Paulo Freire

14	<i>Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education</i> by James A. Banks & Cherry A. McGee Banks (Eds.)
8	<i>Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education</i> by Sonia Nieto & Patricia Bode
7	<i>Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice</i> by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, & Pat Griffin
7	<i>Teaching to Transgress</i> by bell hooks
6	<i>We Can't Teach What We Don't Know: White Teachers, Multiracial Schools</i> by Gary Howard
6	<i>"Why Are All the Black Children Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?" and Other Conversations About Race</i> by Beverly Daniel Tatum
5	<i>The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children</i> by Gloria Ladson-Billings
5	<i>Multicultural Education, Critical Pedagogy, and the Politics of Difference</i> by Christine E. Sleeter & Peter L. McLaren (Eds.)
5	<i>Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom</i> by Lisa Delpit
4	<i>The Critical Pedagogy Reader</i> by Antonia Darder, Marta P. Baltonado, & Rodolfo D. Torres (Eds.)
4	<i>Doing Multicultural Education for Achievement and Equity</i> by Carl A. Grant & Christine E. Sleeter
4	<i>Power, Privilege, and Difference</i> by Allan Johnson
4	<i>Teaching for Social Justice: A Democracy and Education Reader</i> by William Ayers, Jean Ann Hunt, & Therese Quinn (Eds.)
4	<i>Unstandardizing Curriculum: Multicultural Teaching in the Standards-based Classroom</i> by Christine E. Sleeter
3	<i>Diversity and Multiculturalism: A Reader</i> by Shirley R. Steinberg (Ed.)
3	<i>Everyday AntiRacism: Getting Real About Race in School</i> by Mica Pollock
3	<i>Life in Schools: An Introduction to Critical Pedagogy in the Foundations of Education</i> by Peter McLaren
3	<i>The Light in Their Eyes: Creating Multicultural Learning Communities</i> by Sonia Nieto
3	<i>Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives</i> by James A. Banks & Cherry A. McGee Banks (Eds.)

Six of the top 10, and nine out of 20 total books appearing on this list, also appear on the introductory-level book list. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and *Affirming Diversity* appear in the top three of both lists. In contrast, *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives*, which, along with two other texts, received the second most mentions on the introductory-level list, appears toward the bottom of this list. As with the introductory-level list, this list is comprised predominantly of books by people who are

long-time veterans of the multicultural and social justice education milieu. The single exception in this case is *Power, Privilege, and Difference* by Allan Johnson, whose background is in sociology rather than education.

Although debate continues over the contemporary significance and applicability of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and Freire's other work (Rozas, 2007), the book's place toward or at the top of both lists indicates its influence on MTE theory and practice, even if, as mentioned earlier, it often is taught without sufficient sociopolitical context. Its role is particularly observable within this list; three additional books out of the top 11 (*Teaching to Transgress*; *Multicultural Education*, *Critical Pedagogy*, and *the Politics of Difference*; and *The Critical Pedagogy Reader*) are grounded in critical education traditions. This may indicate an increased willingness on the part of some multicultural teacher educators to adjust the materials they employ based on perceived development levels of students, workshop participants, or colleagues. However, the overall similarity of the two lists, as mentioned earlier, simultaneously suggests a possible lack of overall distinction between more or less advanced knowledge bases in MTE participants among multicultural teacher educators.

As with the introductory-level list, only a small percentage of the moderate-expertise books focus exclusively on one oppression or identity. However, each of the three that do centers race. Two of these—“*Why Are All the Black Children Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?*” and *The Dreamkeepers*—appear on both lists. This, again, supports previous research (Amosa & Gorski, 2008) pointing to the centrality of race and racism, sometimes to the exclusion of other identities and oppressions, in MTE practice.

Most Helpful Magazines and Journals

Participants (n=137, total responses=232) were prompted to list up to two magazines or journals that have been “most helpful” to them in their MTE work. The magazines and journals that were named by at least two participants are listed in Table 4.

Table 4. Most Helpful Magazines and Journals (n=137; total=232)

Times Identified	Title
55	<i>Rethinking Schools</i>
26	<i>Multicultural Perspectives</i>
25	<i>Teaching Tolerance</i>
9	<i>Radical Teacher</i>
8	<i>Multicultural Education</i>
7	<i>Equity & Excellence in Education</i>

6	<i>American Educational Research Journal</i>
4	<i>Educational Leadership</i>
3	<i>ColorLines</i>
3	<i>International Journal of Multicultural Education</i>
2	<i>DiversityInc</i>
2	<i>Educational Studies</i>
2	<i>Harvard Educational Review</i>
2	<i>Journal of Multiculturalism in Education</i>
2	<i>Kappan</i>
2	<i>Monthly Review</i>
2	<i>Ms.</i>
2	<i>Ourschools/Ourselfs</i>

Several patterns in these data suggest that multicultural teacher educators draw both practically and theoretically from widely varying discourses as they exist in magazines and journals. For example, the three magazines or journals named most often (and by a large margin) are published by longstanding multicultural or social justice education organizations: *Rethinking Schools* (published by Rethinking Schools), *Multicultural Perspectives* (published by NAME), and *Teaching Tolerance* (published by the Southern Poverty Law Center). Three of the top four—*Rethinking Schools*, *Teaching Tolerance*, and *Radical Teacher*—name classroom teachers and teacher-activists, rather than the academic community, as their primary audiences. Half of the identified sources, but only one of the top four, are academic journals, including eight that use blind peer review. Nine are specific to the subjects of multicultural or social justice education; five are education-related publications that include some content focused on educational equity concerns; and four focus upon social and economic justice issues more broadly, but include some content related to education.

Several of these publications, including *Rethinking Schools*, which was named twice as often as the second most-identified publication, as well as *Monthly Review*, *Radical Teacher*, and *ColorLines*, adopt a consistently critical view, placing education and other systems in sociopolitical context and calling for counter-hegemonic action. Even *Teaching Tolerance*, which historically engaged a more conservative or liberal discourse related to multicultural concerns, has grown a more critical lens. Although others, such as *Educational Leadership*, publish a range of material, including articles which frame multiculturalism in more conservative ways, all of the magazines and journals publish at least *some material* that engages more critical frames (*Educational Leadership's* April 2008 special issue on poverty and learning is an intriguing example of how a variety of frames can appear in one issue).

Only three of these 18 magazines and journals center one particular identity or oppression. Unlike the book lists, though, on which such resources tended to center

race, only one of the three (*ColorLines*) magazines or journals focuses explicitly on race. The other two, *Monthly Review* and *Ms.*, center class and gender, respectively. (It is important to note, though, that all three of these publications address a wide variety of concerns, albeit usually through their identity or oppression-specific lenses.)

Discussion

Looking across these analyses led me to two intriguing insights. Each lends support to existing scholarship about MTE and influences informing multicultural teacher educators' philosophies and practice, but each also provides complicating contours to prevailing perceptions. These insights were (1) that MTE practice is influenced by a range of philosophical and theoretical frameworks, including those consistent with more "critical" approaches to MTE; and (2) that literature centering race and racism is, generally speaking, more influential to the philosophy and practice of MTE than that centering other identities and oppressions.

A Range of Frameworks

Until recently, MTE scholars (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Juárez et al., 2008; Ukpokodu, 2007; Vavrus 2002) generally have agreed that most MTE practice reflects more of a conservative orientation to multiculturalism than one grounded in the equity and social justice roots of multicultural education. My analysis of MTE course syllabi (Gorski, 2009) both tempered and complicated this assessment. I found that, although MTE coursework might not be framed on average in the assimilationist, contributions-based approaches lamented in MTE scholarship, it commonly does fall short of the equity and social justice roots of multicultural education. An easy and *false* assumption, and one to which I have contributed in the past, is that these conditions reflect a lack critical consciousness among multicultural teacher educators. Such a view ignores important sociopolitical context, such as neoliberal pressures on teacher education (Grant, 2004; Hursch, 2005; Sleeter, 2008), lack of program- or department-level support (Juárez et al, 2008; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2008; Ukpokodu, 2007), and student or participant resistance (Case & Hemmings, 2005; de Courcy, 2007; Gayle-Evans & Michael, 2006).

Findings from this study demonstrate that multicultural teacher educators carry a range of dispositions and theoretical frameworks into their MTE practice. The literature informing their MTE work suggests that they are drawn primarily to liberal and critical approaches to multicultural education and that they are, perhaps, most influenced by literature that marries critical theories and perspectives with on-the-ground practical realities—a hallmark shared by *Affirming Diversity*, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, and *Rethinking Schools*, the three sources mentioned most often in the categories analyzed for this study. This, I would argue, has important implications. Even if MTE practitioners are not, on average, drawing as heavily from the critical theoretical frames of these

sources as from their on-the-ground pragmatics—this “if” is beyond the scope of this study—they, at the very least, demonstrate a willingness to engage with these texts, which means they are, in fact, engaging with sociopolitical context and considering counter-hegemonic practice.

This does not mean, of course, that these critical frames emerge consistently in MTE practice. Resistance, lack of support, neoliberal sociopolitical context: the function of these influences is to mitigate criticality. Multicultural teacher educators who might possess deeply critical consciousnesses, who might feel desperate to engage critical frames in their MTE work, have to balance these dispositions with their own on-the-ground realities. This is especially true for those, like lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer multicultural teacher educators, who already bear the burdens, including job insecurity, of one or more forms of institutional oppression (Juárez et al., 2008).

An implication of these conditions is that, if we hope to better inform MTE practice with multicultural education theory, we must find ways to concern ourselves more fully with the often-hostile contexts in which MTE occurs. MTE practitioners, like all educators, need access to quality professional development opportunities that speak to sociopolitical context and critical practice. But these findings, in light of the existing MTE literature, show that they also need support systems, both to help strategize ways to operationalize critical practice in contexts hostile to criticality and to address the deeper, systemic issue of this hostility through organized resistance to neoliberal influences in teacher education. Some networks offer such support, such as the Society for Critical Educators, the Critical Educators for Social Justice special interest group of AERA, the New York Collective of Radical Educators, and so on. But there appears to be little coordinated effort among these or other organizations and networks to address the more systemic conditions in teacher education that prevent multicultural teacher educators from engaging in their work in ways which are more consistently critical rather than conservative or liberal.

Emphasis on Race and Racism

Overall, the data reveal somewhat of an emphasis in MTE—although, considering the limits of this study, not necessary an overwhelming one—on race and racism. Little empirical attention has been paid to the question of which identities and issues are emphasized or deemphasized in MTE. However, the emphasis on race and racism uncovered by this study is consistent with the small body of scholarship that shows that, despite MTE’s theoretical expansion in the U.S. into a field concerned with gender and sexism, sexual orientation and heterosexism, class and economic injustice, and all other identities and oppressions, race and racism remain foregrounded in most multicultural education discourses. For example, Jennings (2007), in an examination of how diversity was addressed in teacher education programs, found that race was emphasized more than any other topic. Similarly, in an analysis of the session offerings at the annual NAME conference, Amosa and Gorski (2008) found a vast majority of

sessions that centered on any particular identity or oppression centered on race—more, in fact, than those centered on all other identities and oppressions combined.

These conditions have driven some scholars to criticize the lack of, and advocate for more, attention in MTE to these other issues (Johnson & McIntosh, 2009; Pohan & Bailey, 1998; Savage & Harley, 2009)—a challenge which, considering their prevalence on the book lists examined for this study, might be a particularly important consideration for the field's most well-known scholars. Certainly, many of the books and journals named in this study address the gamut of identities and oppressions as well as their intersections. Still, in some cases even those books which do incorporate some attention to (dis)ability and ableism, religion and religious oppression, and other topics that receive less attention in the larger MTE discourse, focus substantially less on these than on race and racism. For example, although one chapter focusing extensively on sexual orientation and heterosexism has been added to the newest edition of *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives*, and although the book contains a chapter apiece on class, religion, and language concerns, it contains four chapters dedicated to race or the intersection between race and one other identity. Similarly, although *Rethinking Schools* has provided critically-framed insights into several under-addressed social and educational issues (such as globalization or economic injustice) more, perhaps, than any other magazine or journal on the list excepting *Radical Teacher*, an online search of its archives turns up 294 references to the term “racism” but only 85 to “homophobia” and eight to “heterosexism.”

These emphases and de-emphases in the literature most influential to MTE practitioners hint at the possibility that these practitioners are entering their work with deeper knowledge about race and racism than about other identities and oppressions. This highlights the importance of expending more concerted effort in the MTE milieu toward creating professional development opportunities that focus more intently on some of these other issues, including how they intersect with race and racism. Again, some of these forums exist. In fact, some venues originally focused exclusively on race and racism—the White Privilege Conference comes to mind, although it is not specifically an education-focused conference—have broadened their offerings considerably. *Rethinking Schools*, *Teaching Tolerance*, and other publications which historically have focused largely on race have worked toward diversifying and complicating their foci, as well. Still, it remains important for these publications and organizations—particularly NAME, the largest multicultural education professional organization in the U.S.—to hasten efforts to diversify foci *while maintaining the same critical frames applied to race and racism discourses*.

Conclusion

Without question, examinations of the dispositions and philosophical frameworks of MTE students and participants can provide insights that help MTE practitioners build and deliver effective MTE experiences. However, analyses of the dispositions and frameworks of those doing the multicultural teacher educating can provide an important additional layer of understanding, particularly related to the conditions that encourage

inconsistencies between multicultural education theory and MTE practice. Unfortunately, the body of empirical scholarship on this front remains slim. This study—an analysis of the literature identified by MTE practitioners as most influential to their work—represents one attempt to feed it.

Perhaps the most important finding of this study is that, despite speculation otherwise, MTE practitioners do, in fact, engage with critical theoretical and philosophical materials. This, along with similar evidence from previous scholarship (Gordon, 2005; Sleeter 2008), suggests that the “problem” of the theory-practice inconsistencies might not be located so much in a lack of critical consciousness among MTE practitioners as in the contexts in which they are attempting to deliver MTE.

Overall the findings of this study raise important questions for future exploration. What is the relationship, if any, between the literature MTE practitioners identify as most influential to their MTE work and that which they assign to their students? How might responses to this sort of survey change over time as the sociopolitical context of schooling changes? It is my intention to continue pursuing this line of inquiry and I encourage others—particularly those who have devoted considerable energy to studying MTE students and participants—to lend some of their energies to these and other questions regarding what MTE students and participants are learning, and from whom.

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Appendix: Diversity of Participants

<i>Race</i>	<i>Percentage of Sample</i>
White or European American	67.1%
Black, African, or African American	14.4%
Latina/o, Chicana/o,, or Hispanic	10.6%
Asian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander	4.8%
American Indian or Native American	3.6%
Arab or Arab American	0.7%
Not Captured Adequately by These Categories	6.5%
<i>Gender</i>	<i>Percentage of Sample</i>
Female	73.0%
Male	25.8%
Transgender	0.7%
Not Captured Adequately by These Categories	0.5%
<i>Sexual Orientation</i>	<i>Percentage of Sample</i>
Heterosexual	77.9%
Bisexual	7.7%
Lesbian	6.5%
Gay Man	4.3%
Questioning	1.2%
Not Captured Adequately by These Categories	2.4%
<i>Context in Which Providing MTE</i>	<i>Percentage of Sample</i>
College or University	63.4%
P-12 Public Institution	23.6%
Non-profit	7.5%
P-12 Private Institution	6.0%
Self-employed	5.2%